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*The Rich Man's Charge.*

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A  
SERMON,

Preached at

MORDEN COLLEGE

UPON

BLACK-HEATH,

September the 6<sup>th</sup>. 1711.

BEING

The Day of Annual Commemoration of  
Sir JOHN MORDEN Baronet, Foun-  
der of the said COLLEGE.

By ROBERT WARREN, A. M.  
Rector of Charlton in Kent.

Published at the Request of the Lady MORDEN.

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The Rich Man's Charge

A

SERMON

Preached at

WHEATON COLLEGE

LEO N

BY THE REV. J. H. WHEATON

On the 10th of May 1871

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NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY J. H. WHEATON

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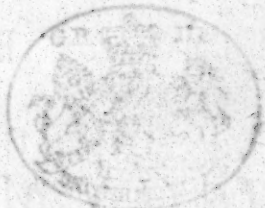
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AT THE COLLEGE PRESS





T O  
Dame *SUSANNA MORDEN*,  
Relict, and sole Executrix of  
Sir JOHN MORDEN Bar<sup>t</sup>. Deceased,  
Visitor of MORDEN COLLEGE;

A N D  
To the HONOURABLE  
Sir *PELATIAH BARNADISTON*, Baronet;

A N D  
To the RIGHT WORSHIPFUL  
Sir *EDMUND HARRISON*, Kt;  
TRUSTEES of the same COLLEGE.

This S E R M O N is most humbly  
dedicated,

By

*Their Ever obedient Servant,*

R. Warren.

Daniel SUZANNE MORRIS

Relig. and Soc. Lecturer of

Sir John Morley Bt. Decided

Author of "The Moral Character"

AND

To His Honor

Sir FRANCIS KENNEDY Bt. Master

AND

To His Honor

Sir EDWARD KENNEDY Bt.

THE MASTER OF THE COURT OF

THE BARRON ON A MOUNTAIN

Decided

By

To His Honor

R. W. WATSON



## I TIM. VI. 17, 18, 19.

*Charge them that are Rich in this World, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches, but in the Living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy :*

*That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate :*

*Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life.*

**T**H E S E three Verses contain a most important Lesson for the Management of our Wealth and Worldly Treasure, a Lesson that deserves to be deeply imprinted on our Memories, to be seriously thought of and diligently practised by us.

*Charge them that are rich in this World; Lay the strictest, the most solemn Injunctions on all those that are under your care, conjure them by all the prevailing Motives you can think of, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches, that they be not puffed up with high Conceits of themselves, nor rely too much upon their own Sufficiency, but that they trust in the Living GOD who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.*

Beseech them to remember that what they have is none of their Propriety, it is the Gift of GOD, He (a) giveth them power to get Wealth, let them not therefore re-

(a) Deut.  
8. 18.

ly upon any other, not upon the Gift which may quickly be resum'd, but upon the Giver, who will never fail them.

The LIVING GOD, intimating, that Riches are fading perishing things, only to endure a little while, but that He who bestows them Lives for ever, and so will be ever able to relieve us.

This is one part of the Charge to Rich Men, to restrain them from the inordinate Love of Money, but they must go further still, they are not meerly not to abuse or misemploy, but they are moreover faithfully, as wise and provident Stewards, to use their Riches and to husband them to the best advantage; which leads us to the other equally necessary, equally required part of the Rich Man's Duty.

Charge them *that they do good, that they be rich in good Works*; that they imploy their Riches in promoting GOD's Honour and Glory by doing good in their Generation with them, and let them be mindful that the Good they do be proportionable to the Opportunities they have received, those that are rich in Earthly Treasures admonish them to be rich in Good Works.

Charge them likewise *that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate*. Where-ever they meet with People in Distress or Want there charge them to be kind and liberal, and let them be constantly disposed to the Offices of Humanity, Brotherly-kindness and Charity.

And the last Verse is a powerful Encouragement to the practice of all this, for by so doing they *lay up in store for themselves a good Foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life*.

The Words being thus explained, their full Sense and Meaning is comprised in two general Heads.

I. The



- I. The Charge to them that are Rich in this World.
- II. The Motive and Inducement to obey it.

I shall speak to these two Points as briefly and clearly as I can.

*First*, Let us consider the Charge which is addressed to Rich Men, and consists of both Negative and Positive Duties. But before I discourse on these, I must examine a little what is meant by *them that are rich in this World*.

Perhaps many will imagine the Command of the Text to bear relation only to those that have plentiful Estates and large Revenues, excluding others of a smaller Income.

I confess the words belong chiefly to them, but they are to be extended likewise, tho' in a lower degree, to every one whom GOD has intrusted with his good Gifts; be they of what kind soever.

Much will be expected from them to whom much has been given, but something will be demanded even of those who have received but one Talent.

For we all are to be upon our continual guard against Temptations to Pride, Arrogancy and Covetousness; and we are according to our Abilities to do good and to communicate to our Brethren.

All that have any Portion of this World's Goods should contribute something to the Common Interest, and these I take to be the Rich Men, to whom this Charge is directed, in which the negative part of their Duty is thus expressed.

*They must not be high-minded, they must not trust in uncertain Riches.* No Task more manly, or hardly any can be more difficult, than to bear good Success with that Decency which as *Men* and as *Christians* we are so much obliged to.

Pro-

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Prosperity of any sort has a natural tendency to swell us into undue Opinions of our own Abilities, and to incline us to depend more upon our selves than we ought.

(b) Prov.  
18. 11.

We are apt to fancy our (b) *Wealth a strong City* which may secure us against all Evil, and to discard the Providence of GOD upon the Sence whereof Religion is founded.

How strangely does a little Money that makes us in truth neither wiser *Men* nor better *Christians*, how a little Reputation and Honour that is not always the consequence of real merit and intrinsick worth, how each of these of it self will exalt and puff us up, but especially, how all of them together transport and ravish us?

These intoxicate and confound weak Heads, so that they forget their Station, and are wholly taken up with admiring their mistaken happiness.

GOD and the necessary dependance we have upon his providential Care and Protection are quite forgotten, and due supplication to Him for his special Aid and Blessing is thrown aside as useless and superfluous.

How necessary then is the Advice here given, that we be not high-minded, especially if we consider how subject we are to be so, and how fatal an Influence it will have upon us?

I might now go on to shew the folly of them that *trust in uncertain Riches*, which seldom make their fix'd abode in any place, but every Day almost exchange their Masters; as also the Danger of those who put not their whole Trust and Confidence in the *LIVING GOD*, who has always the Power, and if we unfeignedly love, and faithfully serve him, will always have an Inclination to defend and succour us; of whose concern for our Welfare we have received already this infallible Testimony, that he *giveth us richly all things to enjoy*.

This



This Point once gained, it is easie and natural for us to proceed further. When we have learned not to be too fond of Money, and not to rely overmuch upon it; when we have gained an habitual Awe of the Divine Providence, and can commit our Selves and Affairs into his Hands, without Distrust or Jealousie, which is the first part of the Charge, then how chearfully shall we go on to the second? How eagerly shall we do good? how readily shall we distribute? how liberally, how unconstrainedly communicate?

What is it that hinders Men from Charity but their setting their Hearts too much upon Gold and Silver, their being afraid of wanting the Necessaries and Comforts of Life, and of coming in their Old Age to Poverty and Indigence?

Is it not in fact notorious, that some who have a greater Estate than the profusest way of living could in a few Years expend, hardly allow enough out of it to maintain their Families in due credit and esteem?

And, O my God, how can we expect to find such as these Charitable, who seem to be divested of common Humanity, and are pinched and starved amidst Opportunities of the greatest Plenty?

These have not a right Notion of a Superiour Being, that can in a moment of time deprive them of all, or without the assistance of Humane Means support them under the want of all.

They do not consider that Money has no other value but what arises from the use of it, that whatever Good or Evil befalls them, 'tis the effect of unerring Wisdom and supreme Bounty; that GOD is never more pleased than with our relieving the Poor and Needy, and that he will assuredly, let what will happen, take care of those that serve him.

Were such things as these rightly weighed, they would sufficiently convince them of the folly of their present practices. But for want of weighing them, they become perfect Idolaters, pay their Homage and Adoration to  
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the Products of the Earth, and put their trust in what will at last prove unable to help them.

In order therefore to excite Men to the great Duty of Charity, we must proceed in the Method of our Apostle in the Text. For it is preposterous to perswade those to it who above all things love their Money, and are not sensible of any advantage they shall reap by bestowing a Portion of it upon the Poor.

First then, Let us learn to root out that odious, that unchristian Quality of Covetousness, for nothing but this and an Atheistical Doubt of Futurity hinders us from doing good with our Riches: And in the next place, let us resolve to depend intirely upon *the Living GOD*, and not over-rate those Riches which He has bountifully conferr'd upon us as the happy Instruments to promote his Honour and Glory by.

Be we perswaded to do this, and we shall perceive one main Difficulty conquered, then all our idle Objections and unhappy Prejudices will soon disappear and vanish, and being thoroughly versed in what we ought not to do, we shall speedily go on to do what we ought, express'd in the next words thus, *that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.*

Which several Expressions may either signify, that upon the increase of our Possessions we should not, as the custom of too many is, wax Proud and Insolent, neglect the Service of GOD, and grow remiss and slothful in the Concerns of our Souls, but rather press forwards to greater degrees of Holiness and Perfection as the Kindness of Heaven towards us is greater.

Or else that we should take care, some way or other, to imploy our Treasures for the advantage of Religion, for the good of our Country or any particular Society of it, in the Cause of our Relations and Friends, and if occasion requires, of our very Enemies too; for so comprehensive is the Rule of our Apostle elsewhere, *(c) as we have opportunity let us do good unto ALL MEN*, which is as far as our Charity can go. And



And of the many ways of doing good which might be mentioned, none deserves to be recommended to your serious consideration more than the Education of Youth.

This is a Favour so extensive in its good Influence both on Church and State, that future Ages will bless our Memories for contributing our utmost to the bringing up *in the Nurture and Admonition of the LORD*, and in the constant communion of our established Church, such poor Children, as without our helping hand, must have been exposed to Ignorance and all kinds of Evil.

And GOD be for ever praised, this way of doing good, through the powerful Perswasives of an

\* Eminent Clergy, has met with vast Success in this and the Neighbouring Kingdoms; And O! may the joint and constant Labours of this kind always be most effectually, most happily accomplished.

\* See the Exce'lent Discourses on this Subject by the Reverend and Learned Dr. Kennet, Dr. Smallridge, Dr. Moss, Dr. Gastrell, &c.

Another way by which we may exactly obey the Charge given in the Text, and by which much good may be done, is in providing for decay'd Gentlemen and others who are past their Labour and fatigue of Business, and are become Objects of our Pity by being reduced, through Losses and Afflictions, to a low and needy Condition:

And methinks unless we have lost our fellow-feeling of the Infirmities of our Nature, and the sense of the common Obligations we lie under to each other, it would be impossible for us to shut up our Bowels of Compassion from them, but should *be ready to distribute, willing to communicate* to their Necessities.

But above all, the Motives that Christianity furnishes us with are of such lasting weight and efficacy, that an uncharitable, unbenevolent Christian is a Contradiction that can never be reconciled.

(d) *By this, says our Saviour, shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another. Love is the distinguishing Mark and Badge of our Profession,* and

(d) S. John 13. 35.

and if we Love our Brethren, especially if we do it with that sincerity of Heart and ardency of Affection which the Gospel requires of us, we shall be unavoidably carried on to commiserate them when they labour under any ill, and shall think our selves strictly obliged to assist and help them as far as we are able.

In this way of doing good, Glad I am to acknowledge that you are before-hand with me ; what therefore might be further added upon this Head would be an Encouragement rather to support and maintain what has been already begun, than any new Instruction to you now at Last to begin.

It would be too tedious to descend to all the minute Branches of doing good, they are innumerable, and we shall not fail to discover them as they arise, if we will but give our selves time for serious Reflection.

One thing however I cannot forbear taking notice of, and that is, we may do good with our Riches to the Souls as well as Bodies of our Brethren.

We do good to their Souls, when we give them frequent Opportunities of waiting on GOD in his House, and of participating of those excellent means of Grace which are there exhibited, as Prayers, Sermons and Sacraments ; these are the standing Methods of GOD's own appointment for every one's Spiritual growth and improvement, and what it costs us this way to be sure is Money laid out to the best advantage, and will in the end make us vast and noble Returns.

In this and all other parts of doing good our Standard and Guide must be the Measure of Riches we have received, for 'tis according to that we are obliged to give, it is not required that we should go beyond it on the one hand, and it highly concerns us not to fall short on the other.

From whence two very material Observations relating to the particular Circumstances of doing good may easily be inferred.

One



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One is, that he who contributes but a little, if he has but little to spare does enough, and needs not fear being accepted of Almighty GOD. The Widow's Mite was esteemed by our Blessed Lord of more value than the costly Oblations of the Rich and Opulent.

Never then let this be any bar to thy good Intentions, that thou hast not Estate enough to further them like some others, but always remember, that however thou art thereby hindred from doing what thou would'st, yet thou art still in a capacity of doing what thou ought'st, still thou hast power to do something, and that something shall be as well taken as if thou could'st do a great deal more.

The other Observation is, that He who contributes more a great deal than many besides has no reason nevertheless to boast or brag, and except He gives proportionably to his Estate is more to be blamed than those who give abundance less.

Answerably to the measure of Wealth we have received GOD expects our Returns, and tho' a small pittance, (e) *a Cup of cold Water only*, an Half-peny or a Farthing suppose, which the poor Man contributes out of his little Stock is questionless very acceptable, and as much as may be required of him, yet the same in Persons of an higher Rank and greater Fortune would argue a mean, a stingy, and ungenerous Spirit; and look like wretched Covetousness and a shameful defect of Zeal towards GOD and Love to Mankind.

(e) S. Mat.  
10. 42.

And thus much may suffice for the Rich Man's Charge, and the manner of performing the Duties of the Text, 1<sup>st</sup>. What he ought not to do, He must *not be high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches.* 2<sup>dly</sup>. What he ought, he must *trust in the Living GOD, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*, and must make it his utmost care *to do good with his Riches, to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, and willing to communicate:* and all this He

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must

must do in order to *Lay up in store for himself a good Foundation against the time to come, that he may lay hold on Eternal Life.*

This is the grand Motive or main Inducement to obey the Charge given, and is the Second General Head I proposed to treat of.

And here let us observe, that altho' the Covetous Niggard is apt to call all Charity by the name of Profuseness and want of Foresight, yet so far is the Charitable Man from this, that he is in truth of all others the most frugal and provident. He is fully perswaded that Riches are uncertain, (f) *they make themselves Wings* and may soon fly away and leave him, that the time will shortly come when Himself shall fail or die, and that his Gold and Silver will stand him in no stead. Wherefore 'tis his great concern to be prepared against it, and how, I beseech you, should this Preparation be made, but by acts of (g) *Charity* which shall cover the multitude of Sins, and procure to Him the everlasting Habitations of Bliss and Joy?

(f) Prov.  
32. 5.

(g) 1 Pet.  
4. 8.

Is not He wretchedly wanting to Himself, that out of an over-eager desire to enrich himself and Family here neglects his Immortal Interest hereafter; that never takes heed what shall become of his precious Soul in the Eternal State, and is only employed in catering for a frail dying Body in this?

And yet upon mature reflection, such will appear to be the true state of the Case betwixt the Covetous Worldling and the Charitable Heavenly-minded Christian; this good Man lays up in store for himself a good Foundation against the time to come, that he may lay hold on Eternal Life.

This good Foundation implies two things.

1. A just and indisputable Title.
2. A great and glorious Reward.

The Foundation is good, because it is laid upon sure and stable Principles, and therefore cannot possibly deceive



ceive or fail us; or else it may be called good, as the Consequents and Fruits of it will most unquestionably prove so.

Perhaps we shall offer no violence to the words if we allow of both these Sences, and therefore we need not be at any pains to reject either of them.

Two of the strongest Motives and most prevailing Arguments that can be conceived are propounded in this Verse to excite us to begin and persevere in works of Charity; I am sorry the time will but just permit me to mention them.

*First*, By these it is that we procure our selves certain hopes of being for ever taken care of when it shall please our Gracious LORD to summon us by Death before his Great Tribunal.

Ah! 'tis a dismal thing, dismal, I say, beyond expression to consider into what an unknown, what an endless state we all must soon be translated, unless we be duly provided for it; unless we have some pleasing hopes and delightful prospect of a kind reception there.

But on the other hand, when we have not meerly a faint and doubtful Prospect, but a firm and certain Assurance that all shall go well with us, when we are secure of a Merciful Mediatour to plead our Cause, then no Scene can be contrived more comfortable, more refreshing than from the Miseries of Time to view the Joys and Happiness of Eternity, and to view them too, as having an Interest in, and being shortly to enjoy them.

Accordingly we may observe, that as Wicked Men dread all thoughts of Heaven or Hell from a consciousness no doubt, of deserving *this* and forfeiting *that*; so upon contrary grounds good Men are very conversant in the Contemplation of them.

Now if we could once be brought to believe, that by performing the Duty of Charity we shall gain an happy Interest in the Blessed JESUS, O! what can more effectually

festually engage us for the future to the faithful performance thereof? except it be the

2d Motive, that we shall thereby lay hold on Eternal Life. We shall not only be perswaded in general that we shall be happy, but shall moreover be assured upon the strongest and most convincing Evidence, that this Happiness shall be in the largest Measures, and of the longest Duration; as to the Measures it shall be inconceivable; and as to the Duration infinite.

Joyn these two together and it is almost impossible to resist the force of them. To live thus by Faith is the noblest Instance of Christian Perfection, and shews we have made a considerable progress in the practice of Religion.

Motives sufficient to work powerfully with the Wise and Good, and to influence us all in some degree to copy after so worthy a Pattern as the Founder of this Colledge whom we this Day commemorate.

A Gentleman whose Virtues were so eminent and well-known to this Neighbourhood, and his Merits so real and great that it would be an Intrusion upon your Patience should I presume to descend to Particulars.

Wherefore I shall with brevity speak in general of what I cannot without great Injustice pass over, bearing a strict regard to Truth, and industriously avoiding Flattery.

He was Religious, Loyal, and exactly just and honest in all his Dealings, no encourager of Parties or fomentor of Unchristian Strife and Division, but one of a most humble, peaceable, and moderate Spirit; courteous and obliging to all that in Neighbourhood, Friendship, or Relation were near unto him; very ready to forgive his Enemies, and truly friendly to those that differed in Opinion and Perswasion from him:

And yet He was a sincere Conformist to our Establish'd Church, and lived up to the Dignity of that Communion of which he profess'd himself a Member.

Of



Of His Charity I need say but little, because this College, yea, this very decent Chappel in which we are now assembled, will be a lasting visible Monument of it, a Building so regular and capacious, that we have few, if any, to equal it in all Circumstances.

A Charity so piously and well-contrived that plainly shews the good of Mens Souls as well as Bodies was consulted, by giving the Members of the Society the happy opportunities of frequenting the Publick Prayers of our Church, hearing GOD's Word read, and preached, and receiving the Holy Sacrament of the LORD's Supper.

But that which adds a peculiar Beauty and Lustre to this noble Work, that which rendred it, no doubt an acceptable Sacrifice to the GOD of Heaven, and will always indear his Memory upon Earth to the virtuous and good is, that it was not the Product of Bribery, Fraud, or Oppression, but as Kind Providence was pleased to bless the Honest Endeavours of its Founder with a plentiful Portion of Riches, so He knew right well that He was one of them to whom the Charge in the Text was given, —that he should *not be high-minded nor trust in uncertain Riches*, but should *be rich in good Works*. Wherefore having finished this good, this expensive Work, He humbly dedicated it to GOD's Honour and Glory in the accepted time of Health and Life; in order to *lay up in store for himself a good Foundation against the time to come that he might lay hold on the Glorious Recompence of Eternal Life*.

Of which I may truly add, that during the time of his Visitation he seemed to have lively hopes, which are at no time and can in no Instances be more visibly shewn than in the devout Exercise of such Religious Duties as *Repentance towards GOD, Faith in our LORD JESUS CHRIST*, a perfect Charity with all Men, a reverend receiving the Holy Communion, and an ab-

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solute resignation of Soul and Body to GOD's Holy Will and Pleasure.

Such a Christian Deportment as this at our Last Hour being the undoubted effect of a serious good Mind demonstrates our assurance to be well grounded, and sets us beyond all dismal Apprehensions of Death and the Grave.

It only remains now, that we magnifie and adore the Wisdom and Goodness of GOD for this and all other Examples of Piety and Charity, Men famous in their Generations, who have departed this Life in His true Faith and Fear. That you more particularly who at present, and that those who shall hereafter partake of this Charity, express your Gratitude to GOD by Actions as well as Words, devoting the remaining part of your Lives to his Service, and walking before him in Righteousness and true Holiness all your Days. By doing so you will best answer the Intentions of your pious Founder, duly observe the Rules and Statutes of the College, and finally Glorifie GOD your Eternal Friend and Chief Benefactor.

And may we all in general, as far as we are capable, endeavour to imitate the Virtues of that Excellent Good Man who is gone but a little while before us. His Humility and Meekness, his Patience and Godliness, his Brotherly-kindness and Moderation are what we all may and ought to imitate.

And if we are not able to equal him in Charity, not capable to distribute in so Large and Liberal a manner as he has done, tho' indeed it be not possible for us to found a College, or endow an Hospital, yet still we may do some good in our Generation by our pious Advice and Example; however still we may learn from Him not *to be high-minded, nor to trust in uncertain Riches, but in the Living GOD, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy,* and to be willing and ready to do the best we can,  
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nothing doubting but He will accept it who has promised not to despise *a Cup of cold Water only*, provided it be given in his name and for his sake : Accept it, did I say, yea it will not only be accepted but esteemed as done to himself, and rewarded by him in that Day when the (h) *LORD JESUS Himself shall descend from* (h) *Heav'n* *with a shout, with the Voice of the Arch-angel,* <sup>4. 16.</sup> *and with the Trump of GOD,* to judge both quick and dead.

In the mean time let us behave our selves so holily, justly, charitably, and unblameably, that we then may find Him favourable and propitious to us; that we may be Objects of his Grace and Inheritours of his Glory; that we may be numbred with his Sheep and placed at his Right Hand; that we may be owned for his Saints and included in that absolving and most unspeakably gracious and affecting Sentence, *Come ye Blessed Children of my Father*, you that have been Eyes to the Blind, and Feet to the Lame; Fathers to the Fatherless, and Husbands to the disconsolate Widow; You that have visited the Sick in time of Affliction, and ministred Comfort to those in Prison; you that have trained up young Children in the Way they should go, and have endowed Hospitals for the relief of needy aged Men; you that have augmented small Livings for the comfortable Subsistence of my faithful Ministers, and have redeemed poor Captives persecuted for Conscience-sake; you that have propagated my Gospel into Foreign Parts for the Conversion of Unbelievers, and have done your utmost to reform the Scandalous Lives of Christian Professors; (i) *Come you, and every one of you Blessed Children* (i) *S. Mat.* <sup>25. 34.</sup> *of my Father, receive the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.*

And then shall these Righteous Charitable Persons with *our good Brother, and all those that are departed in the* <sup>Burial-Office.</sup> *true*

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*true Faith of GOD's Holy Name have their perfect  
 Consummation and Bliss both in Body and Soul in his  
 Eternal and Everlasting Glory, through JESUS CHRIST  
 our LORD; To whom with the Father and the Holy  
 Ghost be ascribed as is most due, all Worship, Blessing,  
 Thanksgiving and Praise; together with all Honour, Love,  
 Service, and Obedience for evermore. Amen.*

**F I N I S.**



